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1 — Okla. weighs next steps after damaging quake at pipeline hub, Energywire, 11/8/2016

<http://www.eenews.net/energywire/2016/11/08/stories/1060045422>

People in Cushing, Okla., spent yesterday cleaning up after the state's most damaging earthquake in five years as state oil and gas officials developed plans to shutter some of the oil-field disposal wells blamed for the shaking. Officials said the magnitude 5 quake Sunday night caused substantial damage to 40 to 50 buildings in the city of 8,000. But the pipelines and oil storage tanks in the "Pipeline Crossroads of the World" escaped without damage.

2 — Update: Cushing city manager estimates 40-50 structures received 'substantial' damage from 5.0 quake, Tulsa World UPDATED: 'Water Protectors' Demand Parks and Wildlife Commissioner's Resignation, Observer, 11/3/2016

<https://www.texasobserver.org/tpwd-protest-kelcy-warren/>

A routine Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) commission meeting turned contentious Thursday morning as protesters, echoing the movement to stop pipeline construction in Standing Rock, North Dakota, urged commissioner Kelcy Warren to step down. Warren is head of Energy Transfer Partners, the Dallas-based company behind the controversial Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Trans Pecos and Comanche Trail pipelines in West Texas.

3 — Broad area targeted by Oklahoma Corporation Commission after Cushing quake, Oklahoman, 11/7/2016

<http://newsok.com/regulators-working-on-new-directive-following-cushing-earthquake/article/5525834>

The Oklahoma Corporation Commission will shut down saltwater disposal wells and restrict disposal volumes in others in a 700-square-mile area around Cushing following Sunday's earthquake, the commission said Monday. "Other plans are being developed that will encompass larger areas," the commission said in a statement.

4 — EPA sends haze reg changes to White House for review, Greenwire, 11/7/2016

<http://www.eenews.net/greenwire/2016/11/07/stories/1060045383>

Following a flood of public feedback, U.S. EPA has sent the final slate of proposed changes to its regional haze regulations to the White House Office of Management and Budget for a standard review. OMB's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs received the draft Saturday, according to the Reginfo.gov site.

5 — Report Takes the Wind Out of Texas' Reputation as Renewable Powerhouse, KUT, 11/4/2016

<http://kut.org/post/report-takes-wind-out-texas-reputation-renewable-powerhouse>

Texas generates more wind power than any other state in the country. It's a fact that a lot of people in the state like to crow about, but a new federal review of which states use the most wind as a percentage of their total electricity generation has called that into question. Texas didn't make the top 10.

6 — Cutting holes in levees has created more land than expected south of Venice, Times-Picayune, 11/3/2016

http://www.nola.com/outdoors/index.ssf/2016/11/cutting_holes_in_levees_has_cr.html

There aren't many state projects that come in under budget and over-deliver, but the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is touting one that should have every resident excited about large-scale sediment diversions that will be installed in Plaquemines Parish in the next decade. Thirty years ago, in 1986, the state implemented the Louisiana Crevasse Project by cutting three crevasses in natural levees on Pass a Loutre Wildlife Management Area. The state had budgeted \$300,000 for the project, but the contractors spent only \$88,000 of that allotment.

7 — EPA grant means East Baton Rouge schools will replace 30 diesel buses with propane-fueled ones, Advocate, 11/3/2016

http://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/news/education/article_7b7f6518-a1da-11e6-b30f-6b9e2352182f.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter&utm_campaign=user-share

The EPA is giving the East Baton Rouge Parish school system \$773,000 to replace 30 of its diesel school buses over the next two years with more eco-friendly propane-powered buses. The school system learned in early October that it had won the grant, which is coming from the federal agency's National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program. The grant was presented to the School Board on Thursday and the board is expected to approve it at its Nov. 7 meeting

8 — IF DEMAND FOR OIL STOPS GROWING, WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR TEXAS AND EVERYONE ELSE?, Texas Standard, 11/7/2016

<http://www.texasstandard.org/stories/categories/energy-environment/>

As soon as five years from now, global demand for oil might stop growing. That prediction may not seem surprising if it came from an environmental group, but when oil giant Shell said as much in a recent conference call, it caused a stir. Oil companies don't usually talk publicly about people losing interest in their product. So, if demand really does stop growing, what would that mean and how could it happen?

9 — More algae seen on Buffalo River, Ark. Democrat Gazette, 11/7/2016

<http://www.arkansasonline.com/news/2016/nov/07/more-algae-seen-on-buffalo-river-201611/>

The National Park Service has collected two samples of algae at the Buffalo National River that appear to indicate more types of algae in the river than previous sampling by another federal agency revealed. In September, after tourists reported algae on a 30-mile stretch of the river from U.S. 65 to Spring Creek, the U.S. Geological Survey sampled algae and found it to be mostly harmless. The algae found was from the genus *Oedogonium*.

10 — Oklahoma Agency Plans to Shut Disposal Wells After Earthquake, Bloomberg, 11/4/2016

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-11-08/oklahoma-agency-plans-to-shut-disposal-wells-after-earthquake>

Oklahoma's oil and gas regulator plans to shut some disposal wells and reduce the volume of others as its initial response to Sunday's earthquake near the oil hub of Cushing. "Other plans are being developed that will encompass larger areas" and more details are coming tomorrow, the Oklahoma Corporation Commission said Monday in an e-mailed advisory.

11 Climate Summit's Urgent Goal: Cut More Emissions, Faster, Inside Climate News, 11/8/2016

<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/07112016/climate-summit-un-marrakech-morocco-cut-emissions-paris>

If there was one unifying principle as this year's United Nations climate conference started in Marrakesh, Morocco on Monday, it was that the world needs to lift its ambition in fighting global warming. Unless the world acts quickly, warned Erik Solheim, head of the UN Environment Program (UNEP), "we will grieve over the avoidable human tragedy.

12 — N4T Investigators: Border patrol agents concerned over dangerous duty, KVOA, 11/5/2016

<http://www.economist.com/news/briefing/21709530-water-becomes-ever-more-scant-world-needs-consume-it-use-it-more-efficiently-and>

Agents from the Tucson and Three Points stations are now required to take turns working five-day shifts at the San Miguel camp. Located about two hours southwest of Tucson, the camp sits near the U.S.-Mexico border on the lands of the Tohono O'odham Nation. Agents say the new mandate is unnecessary.

"Drinking water at most FOBs is tested every 30 to 90 days. If testing results return showing water contamination exceeds EPA safe drinking water limits, the affected FOB is shut down until mitigation strategies are implemented and subsequent water testing shows that it is safe.

You Don't Miss Your Water ... 'Til It Turns Green, Austin Chron, 11/7/2016

<http://www.austinchronicle.com/daily/news/2016-11-07/you-dont-miss-your-water-til-it-turns-green/>

There was good news and bad news at City Council's Nov. 3 meeting (last Thursday). The best news was a lilting medley from Ruben Ramos and the Mexican Revolution at live music time. The worst was a staff briefing on the future of Onion Creek, if Dripping Springs succeeds in its plan for wastewater disposal.

EARTHQUAKES

Okla. weighs next steps after damaging quake at pipeline hub

Mike Soraghan, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, November 8, 2016



Damage is seen yesterday in Cushing, Okla., which was struck with a magnitude 5 earthquake Sunday night. Photo courtesy of AP Images.

People in Cushing, Okla., spent yesterday cleaning up after the state's most damaging earthquake in five years as state oil and gas officials developed plans to shutter some of the oil-field disposal wells blamed for the shaking.

Officials said the magnitude 5 quake Sunday night caused substantial damage to 40 to 50 buildings in the city of 8,000. But the pipelines and oil storage tanks in the "Pipeline Crossroads of the World" escaped without damage.

The Oklahoma Corporation Commission announced that it plans to order some disposal wells to close and others to reduce the volume of wastewater they inject. But the agency said it won't release details until today.

OCC officials said the plan will cover about 700 square miles.

State Rep. Cory Williams, a Democrat from Stillwater, repeated his call yesterday for the state to take a bolder step — impose a moratorium on injecting wastewater underground in the state's earthquake-prone areas.

"We need to do more than just pray for divine assistance," Williams said in a release, an apparent riff on the "Oilfield Prayer Day" declared last month by Gov. Mary Fallin (R). "The Good Lord has given us His guidance, but the people who run this state apparently aren't paying attention."

Amid previous OCC-imposed restrictions and a production slump, the rate of earthquakes in Oklahoma has slowed somewhat this year. But the quakes have gotten bigger.

Sunday night's earthquake was the fifth-largest ever recorded in Oklahoma. The largest ever recorded was about two months ago — a magnitude 5.8 quake near Pawnee. And a magnitude 5.1 quake shook Fairview in western Oklahoma in February.

Most of the larger quakes have been far from cities and haven't caused as much damage. But a magnitude 5.7 quake in 2011 about 45 minutes east of Oklahoma City injured two people and destroyed more than a dozen homes.

Cushing is a small town with an outsized role in the nation's energy network. In addition to the significant number of large transmission lines that terminate and originate there, Cushing has an expanse of oil storage called the "tank farm," where dozens of companies store about 50 million barrels of U.S. and Canadian oil.

The hub serves as the trading point for oil futures and options contracts under the U.S. price benchmark West Texas Intermediate.

The Department of Homeland Security has taken an interest in the earthquakes in the area because its facilities are considered critical national infrastructure, according to a paper by scientists from the U.S. Geological Survey published online last year.

The paper said reactivated faults in the area could cause earthquakes as large as a magnitude 5.7 event centered near Prague, Okla., in November 2011. A quake of that size, the paper said, "could seriously damage storage tanks and pipelines in the Cushing facility."

USGS on the ground in Cushing

The U.S. Geological Survey had already taken a strong interest in Cushing after previous quakes, installing six portable instruments around the area. And that paid off Sunday, said Rob Williams, a research geophysicist in the Denver office of USGS. The instruments recorded data about ground motion that are valuable for building engineers and hard to come by east of the Rocky Mountains, he said.

"They have to use a lot of models to estimate," Williams said. "This begins to fill in that hole with actual observations."

USGS is weighing whether to send additional instruments, he said. The agency also diverted a two-person team that had been working in the Fairview area to Cushing.

They were looking for cracks in the earth and other "surface expressions" of the quake.

In Cushing yesterday, city hall, schools and several other public buildings were closed as officials cleaned up and assessed damage. The city water department shut down Highway 18, a main thoroughfare through the city, to repair a water main break caused by the quake.

Scientists have known for decades that underground injection of fluid can lubricate faults and unleash earthquakes. Seismologists now suspect that the boom in oil and gas production in the central United States, along with the wastewater that comes with it, might be causing a sharp increase in the number of earthquakes. Scientists have not linked hydraulic fracturing to seismic swarms or large earthquakes in the central United States.

The problem has been particularly severe in Oklahoma. Seismologists say "optimally" aligned faults combined with extraction methods in Oklahoma that produce unusually large amounts of water have combined to trigger swarms of earthquakes.

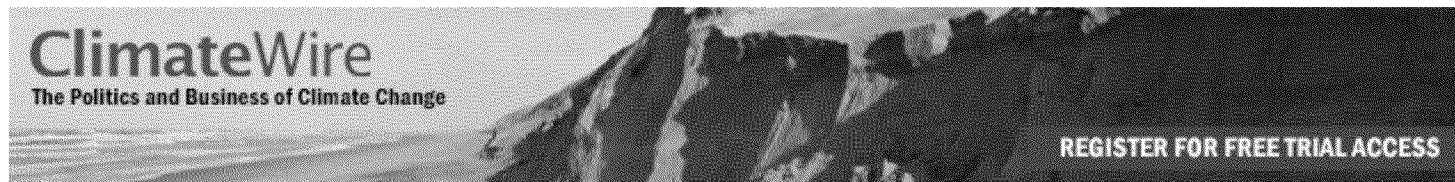
Last year, 903 quakes of magnitude 3 or greater shook the state, a sharp increase over 585 the year before. So far this year, Oklahoma has been shaken by 576 quakes of magnitude 3 or greater.

There was notable disagreement among science agencies about the magnitude of Sunday's quake. While USGS listed it as magnitude 5.0, the Oklahoma Geological Survey (OGS) listed it as magnitude 4.6. OGS Director Jerry Boak said OGS would accept the USGS's magnitude. By last night, OGS had changed its earthquake catalog to list the USGS magnitude 5 reading.

A magnitude 5 earthquake is two and half times stronger than a magnitude 4.6 quake and releases four times as much energy.

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UPDATED: 'Water Protectors' Demand Parks and Wildlife Commissioner's Resignation

Texas Parks and Wildlife commissioner Kelcy Warren is also the CEO of controversial pipeline builder Energy Transfer Partners.



Ńávěěňá Šáđášívám

Jacalyn Hagans and Pete Hefflin, members of the Society of Native Nations, joined 200 other protesters outside a Texas Parks and Wildlife meeting Thursday. Demonstrators called

for commissioner Kelcy Warren's resignation, saying his position as CEO of pipeline builder Energy Transfer Partners creates a conflict of interest.

Update, 7:00 p.m., November 3: **Now Reading: UPDATED: 'Water Protectors' Demand Parks and Wildlife Commissioner's Resignation**

Warren has used his position to promote the construction of the Texas Eastern Wildlife Management Area. The issue has been tabled till the next meeting. He also agreed to meet with Pete Hefflin of the Society of Native Nations to discuss desecration of sacred burial grounds. [\(https://twitter.com/share?text=Water+Protectors+Demand+Parks+and+Wildlife+Commissioner's+Resignation&url=https://www.texasobserver.org/twd-protest-kelcy-warren/\)](https://twitter.com/share?text=Water+Protectors+Demand+Parks+and+Wildlife+Commissioner's+Resignation&url=https://www.texasobserver.org/twd-protest-kelcy-warren/)
This post has been updated to include comments from an Energy Transfer Partners spokesperson. [\(mailto:?&body=https://www.texasobserver.org/twd-protest-kelcy-warren/\)](mailto:?&body=https://www.texasobserver.org/twd-protest-kelcy-warren/)

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Original story:

A routine Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) commission meeting turned contentious Thursday morning as protesters, echoing the movement to stop pipeline construction in Standing Rock, North Dakota, urged commissioner Kelcy Warren to step down.

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Warren is head of Energy Transfer Partners, the Dallas-based company behind the controversial Dakota Access Pipeline and the Trans-Pecos and Comanche Trail pipelines in West Texas.
(<http://www.facebook.com/energytransfer> - <http://www.texasobserver.org/tpwd-protest-kelcy-warren/>)

Dressed in shades of blue to signify the importance of protecting water sources, beating drums, burning sage, singing and chanting, about 200 protesters gathered outside the department headquarters in South Austin. Many held up colorful signs that read "Stop Kelcy Warren," "Oil pipelines are meant to be blocked" and "Save our parks from Kelcy Warren."
(<https://twitter.com/share?text='Water Protectors' Demand Parks and Wildlife Commissioner's Resignation&url=http://www.texasobserver.org/tpwd-protest-kelcy-warren/>)

The commission met Thursday to decide on a number of issues (<http://tpwd.texas.gov/business/feedback/meetings/2017/1103/agenda/index.phtml>) related to the operation of the agency and land exchanges. Also on the agenda: whether the agency should grant a pipeline easement in the J.D. Murphree Wildlife Management Area in East Texas and accept 640 acres near the Big Bend Ranch State Park. Protesters who testified at the hearing used the opportunity to highlight Warren's position on the board and what they saw as a resulting conflict of interest.

"Because of Mr. Warren's monetary connection to Governor Abbott's office, because his company is building pipelines in Texas in the largest protected national park, because there's no guarantee these pipelines won't leak, causing irreparable damage to these lands, I respectfully ask you, Mr. Warren, please recuse yourself from this position," said Sarah Hickman, an Austin musician, in her testimony. "I do not believe you can honestly make objective decisions on behalf of the parks you're appointed to protect."

For the most part, Warren remained silent as Hickman and others repeatedly accused him of disrespecting Native Americans and putting profits ahead of people. Since 2013, Warren has given more than \$700,000 (<https://www.texastribune.org/library/data/campaign-finance/filer/00051153-texans-for-greg-abbott/>) to Abbott's Political Action Committee, Texans for Greg Abbott, and the Governor's Race Fund. Warren to the commission last year. But it's not Warren's close ties to Texas politicians alone that have protesters angry.

Over the last several months, Energy Transfer Partners has come under fire from environmental, social justice and native groups over its treatment of protesters against the Dakota Access Pipeline in Standing Rock. There, the company has used attack dogs and pepper spray, critics say, in an attempt to intimidate and dissuade protesters. Last month an independent expert on the treatment of indigenous peoples appointed by the United Nations also criticized the treatment of the protesters at Standing Rock, saying the U.S government should "fully protect and facilitate the right to freedom of peaceful assembly of indigenous peoples." Those sentiments spilled over into the protest at the TPWD headquarters on Thursday.

"Kelcy Warren is a sham," said Rockie Gonzales, an environmental and social justice activist attending the protest. "He's ordering dogs on our people and ruining our lands."

Vicki Granado, a spokesperson for Energy Transfer Partners, told the *Observer* in an email that the company's "priority has been and remains safety – the safety of our employees and our assets, the safety of those who live and work in the area and the safety of the environment."

Gonzales said she and other protesters, many of whom refer to themselves as "water protectors," saw the protest as an expression of solidarity with the demonstrations in North Dakota. Like the Standing Rock protesters who fear that the Dakota Access Pipeline will break and contaminate water sources, Gonzales

said, protesters in Texas worry that fossil fuel projects such as the West Texas pipelines, LNG plants along the coast, fracking in Balmorhea and the Eagle Pass coal mine would pollute rivers and groundwater sources.

Now Reading: UPDATED: 'Water Protectors' Demand Parks and Wildlife Commissioner's Resignation
"When it happened in Standing Rock, we became so aware of how they disrespectful they are," said Jacalyn Hagans, a Cherokee and a member of the Society of Native Nations. "As native people we believe the creator tasked us with protecting the earth and we take that seriously and we've just had enough."

Although the protest Thursday was peaceful, the agency had extra security on hand. TPWD spokesman Josh Havens said the agency had received some threats over the last few days, but said he did not know the nature of the threats.

Hagans said her group and others have more protests planned this month and that they would continue until Kelcy Warren stepped down or was removed from his position.

"The way I look at it, this is a serious enough thing for me that I will fight till I die, or I will die fighting," said Hagans. "If it would help the cause, I would do that for my people."

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by Naveena Sadasivam (<https://www.texasobserver.org/author/naveena-sadasivam/>)

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Broad area targeted by Oklahoma Corporation Commission after Cushing quake



by Adam Wilmoth • Published: November 7, 2016 9:57 AM CDT • Updated: November 7, 2016 6:01 PM CDT

5.0 magnitude quake hits Cushing, rumbles central Oklahoma

Oklahoma bridges inspected following Cushing earthquake

Regulators working on new directive following Cushing earthquake

Buildings to be closed Monday in Cushing due to earthquake damage

Official: 40 to 50 buildings damaged in Oklahoma quake



Displaced bricks litter the sidewalk Monday at the door of this downtown Cushing storefront on East Broadway after Sunday night's earthquake. [Photo by Jim Beckel, The Oklahoman]

The Oklahoma Corporation Commission will shut down saltwater disposal wells and restrict disposal volumes in others in a 700-square-mile area around Cushing following Sunday's earthquake, the commission said Monday.

"Other plans are being developed that will encompass larger areas," the commission said in a statement.

Details of the plan are expected to be released

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Officials with USGS assess earthquake damage in

2017-001583-0172

Tuesday.

The action comes after Sunday's earthquake centered near Cushing. The U.S. Geological Survey rates the tremor as a magnitude 5.0, which would make it the fifth-strongest in state history. The Oklahoma Geological Survey lists the quake as a magnitude 4.6.

Special Coverage: page maps every earthquake that happens in Oklahoma

Sunday's Cushing earthquake followed two months after a magnitude 5.8 earthquake struck near Pawnee. That quake was the largest in recorded state history.

"I wouldn't be surprised if the areas (of regulatory action) are overlapping," Oklahoma Geological Survey Director Jeremy Boak said. "It may be time to ask whether we need another broad-scale, regional-scale change in injection practices in that area."

Earthquake research and regulations have focused on saltwater disposal wells that take high volumes of water produced along with oil and pump them into the Arbuckle formation, which is the deepest sedimentary rock layer underlying much of Oklahoma.

Most wells in Oklahoma and throughout the world produce ancient saltwater along with oil and natural gas. The amount of water produced varies widely from formation to formation.

Sometimes called fossil water, the produced water is believed to be remnants of ancient oceans, containing many times the salt content of seawater, along with other chemicals and components.

Following previous large earthquakes, the Corporation Commission has shut in disposal wells nearest to the earthquake epicenter and restricted disposal volumes within a certain distance.



Cushing



5.0 magnitude quake hits Cushing, rumbles central Oklahoma



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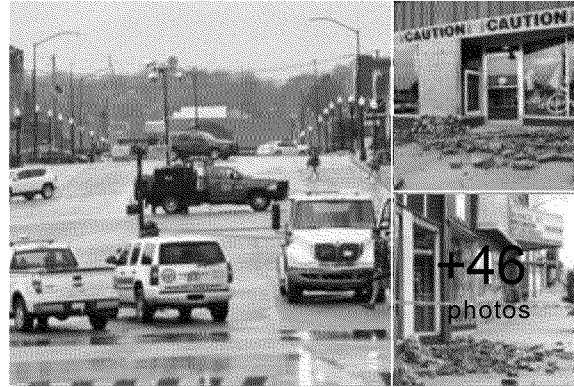
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The commission in September 2015 ordered two saltwater disposal wells shut in and three others restricted near Cushing after a magnitude 4.1 earthquake in the area.

Broader regulations in late 2015 and early 2016 restricted Arbuckle disposal volumes throughout much of central and western Oklahoma. Together, the actions have shut in 90 wastewater disposal wells and reduced disposal volumes in an additional more than 250 wells.



The state's largest earthquakes have occurred on the perimeter of the area of interest. The largest quakes have been near Prague, Fairview, Pawnee and now Cushing.

"Maybe that's where you would expect some faults that haven't been contacted by this pressure pulse," Boak said. "But it's surprising to have some that did trigger a year ago and are now back."

RELATED: Highway in Cushing shut down, water line break caused by earthquake

Cushing is interesting in that the commission already has addressed most of the saltwater disposal wells in the area. Some have been shut in and others have been plugged back to shallower disposal rock zones.

Still, U.S. Geological Survey research geophysicist Daniel McNamara a year ago said the Cushing area likely could support a stronger earthquake.

"Based on stress changes due to the 2014 Cushing sequence and continued wastewater injection, we hypothesize that the Cushing and Wilzetta-Whitetail fault zones are critically stressed in a region sufficient enough to increase the likelihood of a large and damaging

earthquake similar to the 2011 M 5.6 Prague earthquake," McNamara wrote in a paper published in October 2015.

Despite the recent large earthquakes, Boak said the regulatory effort is working.

"We've had a substantial decline in frequency throughout the whole area of interest," Boak said. "We've had more than 1 million barrels a day taken offline from injections. We've had a decline in magnitude 2.8 or larger from 4.5 a day one year ago to 2.3 a day today."

RELATED: Oklahoma bridges inspected following Cushing earthquake

Magnitude 4.0 or greater quakes also are occurring about half as often as one year ago, despite the two large quakes over the past two months, Boak said.

"Intensity is a condition of the fault being contacted and the pressure of the fault," Boak said. "As the pulse spreads and declines, it's finding faults with stored energy on them. Earthquake size is a function of faults, and not how much injection is going on."

Others, however, say regulatory efforts have not gone far enough. State Rep. Cory Williams, D-Stillwater, said both the overall rate and intensity are far too high.

"His (Boak's) rush to celebrate that we suck less is not exactly a goal that I share," Williams said. "We're still the seismic hot spot of the entire nation. I don't think you can look at Cushing last night and say we're having any measure of success at all."

Williams for more than three years has called for a moratorium on disposal wells within the seismically active areas of the state.

RELATED: What are some of the biggest earthquakes in Oklahoma history?

"When this started, we had a bunch of magnitude 2s and 3s. Then we started having 4s, and now we're having 5s. That does not bode well for a state with primarily brick-and-mortar construction, as we can see in Cushing now," Williams said.

"We can all see the reduction in volume is not working. We should put a moratorium on the entire seismically risked area. The Corporation Commission has mapped the area. Shut it down in that area."

Boak, however, said it will take time for the seismic activity to decline.

"Given the broad scale, I'm not sure I know how much faster we could expect it to decline if we shut it all down," Boak said. "It may be that we should have recognized the problem sooner, but I'm not sure that given we didn't, you would have avoided any more a more precipitous action."

Oklahoma Oil and Gas Association President Chad Warmington said current regulations are working.


RELATED: [Official: 40 to 50 buildings damaged in Oklahoma quake](#)

"One day does not make a trend," he said. "One day is not indicative of the progress that has been made over the course of the past two years. We have known all along there could be events like this. But overall, the trend is down, and that's a good thing. We need to keep working to head in that direction."

Still, more regulations are likely, Boak said.

"I do expect to see more 4s," he said. "The Corporation Commission generally feels the need to act following 4s. I would expect to see more Arbuckle local reductions and maybe a more regional reduction."

"I don't know where the next one will be, but I am worried there will be a next one. The only thing that gives me optimism is the rate of total earthquakes is strongly declining."



Adam Wilmoth

Adam Wilmoth returned to The Oklahoman as energy editor in 2012 after working for four years in public relations. He previously spent seven years...[read more >](#)

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12 Comments

AIR POLLUTION

EPA sends haze reg changes to White House for review

Sean Reilly, E&E News reporter

Published: Monday, November 7, 2016

Following a flood of public feedback, U.S. EPA has sent the final slate of proposed changes to its regional haze regulations to the White House Office of Management and Budget for a standard review.

OMB's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs received the draft Saturday, according to the [Reginfo.gov](#) site.

Although EPA had once hoped to wrap up work on the package by last month, that schedule has apparently been slowed by the close scrutiny the proposed changes have received from both industry and conservation groups.

Dating to 1999 in its current form, the haze program is geared toward returning visibility at 156 large national parks and wildlife refuges — including such iconic settings as the Grand Canyon — to natural conditions by 2064.

Even under that expansive timetable, however, the program has been beset by contention and litigation.

In July, the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals slapped a stay on EPA's plan that would require seven coal-fired plants in Texas to install or upgrade sulfur dioxide scrubbers. Legal proceedings in that case are now on hold while the state and federal regulators try to hammer out a settlement.

Late last month, Utah asked the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for a similar freeze on a separate EPA plan imposing new nitrogen oxides controls on two coal-fired power plants owned by PacifiCorp ([E&ENews PM](#), Oct. 28). The Oregon-based power producer has also requested a stay; the court has not yet ruled on those requests.

Under the initial draft of the proposed changes to the haze program, signed by EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy in April, states would get another three years — from 2018 to 2021 — to rework the next round of implementation plans with the goal of better meshing haze reduction work with implementation of the Clean Power Plan and other air quality initiatives ([Greenwire](#), April 26).

EPA is also seeking to bring National Park Service employees and other federal lands managers into the consultation process earlier and to require states to address situations where park visibility is clouded by either a single pollution source or a small number of such sources.

Advocacy groups on both sides have found aspects to criticize. While environmental organizations applaud the idea of prodding states to crack down on individual pollution sources, they object to the proposed three-year delay for submission of state implementation plans.

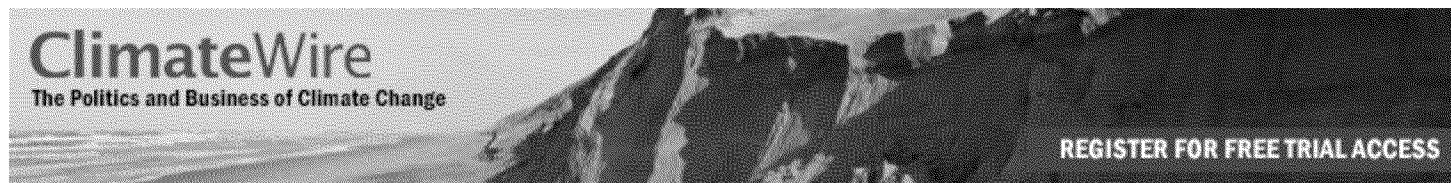
That extension has the backing of the National Association of Manufacturers and other industry groups that question whether EPA is seeking to hold states responsible for "background" pollution outside their control.

Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge (R) and seven other Republican attorneys general have also accused EPA of seeking to force a political agenda on states ([Greenwire](#), Aug. 15).

The proposal received almost 188,000 comments, according to the Regulations.gov site, most of them resulting from petition drives and email campaigns led by the National Parks Conservation Association and other environmental groups.

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Cutting holes in levees has created more land than expected south of Venice



By [Todd Masson, NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune](#)

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on November 03, 2016 at 6:50 AM, updated November 03, 2016 at 6:57 AM

There aren't many state projects that come in under budget and over-deliver, but the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is touting one that should have every resident excited about large-scale sediment diversions that will be installed in Plaquemines Parish in the next decade.

Thirty years ago, in 1986, the state implemented the Louisiana Crevasse Project by cutting three crevasses in natural levees on Pass a Loutre Wildlife Management Area. The state had budgeted \$300,000 for the project, but the contractors spent only \$88,000 of that allotment.

The project was funded with state revenues through the Coastal Environment Protection Trust Fund, but no one knew at the time exactly how successful it would be, according to a department news release.

In their wildest dreams, they wouldn't have predicted this. The crevasses were expected to produce land for 10 to 20 years, but are still delivering positive gains today and are now expected to be land-builders for at least the next decade. To date, the cuts have built 760 acres of marsh at a cost of only \$115 per acre.

The foresight of planners drew the praise of department Secretary Charlie Melancon.

"It was a low-cost undertaking that has returned vital acreage to Pass a Loutre, and provides critical habitat for many wildlife and fish species," he said. "Equally impressive is that these crevasses continue to do the job 30 years after their formation, and could keep going for some time to come."

The department issued two satellite maps showing how much land has grown in the area as a result of the crevasses. Toggle between the images above to see the change.

The once open water bays and ponds where these crevasses were created now host a mosaic of habitats, including tidal mudflats, emergent fresh marsh and woody vegetation. They have provided estuary habitat for marine fisheries, freshwater fish, a variety of migratory and resident birds, nesting habitat for alligators and habitat for terrestrial mammals such as white-tailed deer and rabbits, the department said.

Department staff pioneered the land-building technique more than half a century ago by making cuts into natural levees of the river and its passes, according to the agency.

How the crevasses build land is simple physics. The cuts allow the sediment-laden water to flow into interior marshes and ponds. Over time, the sediment builds up and begins to return open water areas to healthy freshwater marsh.

This natural process of land creation comes at virtually no cost once the cut has been made and allows for a natural gradient of marsh to form. This low-cost restoration technique is unique as it continues to build additional acreage over time rather than eroding away. It is also the cheapest land-creation technique currently in the coastal-wetland-restoration toolbox, the department said. Having a marsh slowly and naturally recreate itself with varying elevations allows for more diversity in the species that use the habitat.

When the crevasses were first created, there was little change in the initial year. But by the second growing season, changes began to take place, such as the shallowing of the area that receives the sediment and the establishment of submerged aquatic vegetation.

After a few years, channels began to form along the water bottom, and tidal annual vegetation such as delta duck potato and cattail began to materialize where the SAV was previously. After a few more seasons, duck potato stands expanded, but the original locations were replaced by perennial vegetation as the elevation of the soil increased.

Finally, willow trees and woody vegetation took root. While this transformation from open water to wooded ridges took place, the footprint of the crevasses increased and pioneering vegetation expanded into new areas.

Crevasses create a rich mosaic of habitats slowly over time. Each of these habitats is important to many wildlife species throughout the year and provide resources for many animals, including migratory birds, nesting alligators, resident wading birds and many species of conservation concern, the department said.

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EPA grant means East Baton Rouge schools will replace 30 diesel buses with propane-fueled ones

BY CHARLES LUSSIER | CLUSSIER@THEADVOCATE.COM NOV 3, 2016 - 8:00 PM



Advocate staff photo by BILL FEIG

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The first Lee High School students get on the first bus to arrive for the first day of school for the EBR school system on Wednesday August 10, 2016.

Charles Lussier

The EPA is giving the East Baton Rouge Parish school system \$773,000 to replace 30 of its diesel school buses over the next two years with more eco-friendly propane-powered buses.

The school system learned in early October that it had won the grant, which is coming from the federal agency's National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program. The grant was presented to the School Board on Thursday and the board is expected to approve it at its Nov. 7 meeting.

The \$773,000 represents roughly 25 percent of the estimated \$2.8 million cost of the buses. The school system will cover the rest.

The shift from diesel to propane is expected to improve air quality by lowering some air pollutants as well as emitting fewer greenhouse gases.

“(The Department of) Transportation is committed to moving in that direction,” said Pat Friedrich, district grants writer. “(Propane) is clean, it’s quiet, and you don’t get that exhaust when you drive through the community that gets into the children’s lungs.”

The school system plans to purchase 15 propane buses for the 2017-18 school year and 15 more for the 2018-19 school year. Friedrich said the Transportation Department already has 10 propane buses on the road.

The 30 buses replaced as part of the Environmental Protection Agency grant can be no older than the model year 1994. In order to accelerate air quality gains, Friedrich said, EPA wants to get old buses off the road but not necessarily the oldest in school bus fleets, buses that will have to be replaced anyway.

The school system has more than 550 buses in its fleet. After the flood, it bought 68 new buses to replace ones that had been flood damaged.

Also on Thursday, the School Board tentatively approved a calendar for the 2017-18 school year. The calendar will come up for final approval on Nov. 17. The proposed calendar calls for teachers to start work Aug. 3 and students to arrive Aug. 9. The last day of school for students would be May 22, 2018 and the last day for teachers the following day.

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By Mose Buchele | November 7, 2016 9:15 am

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Eddie Seal/Texas Tribune

An oil & gas drilling rig is drilling a well for Pioneer Natural Resources in the Eagle Ford Shale formation near Yorktown.



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That's to say, demand doesn't end because supply ends. It ends because people start using other sources of energy. What would they use to replace the world's most popular transportation fuel? Many people hope renewables, but fossils fuels are also likely, says Frank Wolak, director of Stanford's **Program of Energy and Sustainable Development**.

"Right now, the cheap energy BTUs, as I'm sure you're aware, is natural gas and coal," he said. "So the fact that you see a peak demand in oil – it's not a surprise."

How would Texas, which produces more oil than any other state in the country, fare if demand peaks?

"Texas will do just fine," Wolak said. "Because, basically, Texas produces a lot of natural gas."

Michael Webber is deputy director of the **Energy Institute at UT Austin**, agrees.

"The other thing is in Texas is we make a lot of money downstream, meaning we use cheap oil and cheap natural gas to make chemicals and fertilizers and other products," he said. "And, if there's declining demand, perhaps, that means there will be maybe declining prices for those feedstocks, which means our chemicals companies maybe they'll be more competitive."

Declining oil prices would also make it cheaper to fill up your car.

"The price pressures would be to the downside more likely," said Denton Cinquegrana from the **Oil Price Information Service**.



like others, he was not convinced that Shell's peak demand prediction was correct.

"Our own models here at the Baker Institute show that demand will continue to grow for a while," he said.

In the model he's referring to increasing demand will be driven by economic growth in Asian countries, and that's a belief held by big oil companies other than Shell.

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More algae seen on Buffalo

Sampling IDs several types

By Emily Walkenhorst 
This article was published November 7, 2016 at 2:41 a.m.

Comments

The National Park Service has collected two samples of algae at the Buffalo National River that appear to indicate more types of algae in the river than previous sampling by another federal agency revealed.

In September, after tourists reported algae on a 30-mile stretch of the river from U.S. 65 to Spring Creek, the U.S. Geological Survey sampled algae and found it to be mostly harmless. The algae found was from the genus Oedogonium.

In October, Chuck Bitting, the natural resource program manager for the Buffalo National River, said he wanted to do more testing along that stretch.

Bitting, whose wife was one of several people who spotted algae while canoeing, had wanted to return to the area to ensure that none of the algae is a type commonly called blue-green algae that can be harmful to humans and wildlife.

2017-001583-0172

Bitting said his team didn't find any blue-green algae but tested two samples that appeared to show algae from the genres of Oedogonium, Spirogyra, and either Cladophora or Pithophora. Instead of sending the samples to the U.S. Geological Survey to be tested, Bitting and another researcher placed the samples under a microscope, took pictures and sent the magnified images to the agency, which determined what algae they were looking at, he said.

Spirogyra, Cladophora and Pithophora are also known as green algae, which is not as harmful as blue-green algae but can depress oxygen levels for fish in the water at night, Bitting said. Green algae also produces oxygen during the day, but Bitting said he didn't know if the algae produces more oxygen than it consumes. At the least, he said, algae is an obstruction for fish.

Bitting said the algae could be caused by many things, and he doesn't have enough information to pinpoint a specific cause.

He said levels of algae-causing nitrates and phosphorous in the river have steadily increased since annual testing began in 1985. That could be because of human activity, including leaking septic systems or agriculture in the river's watershed.

Bitting said he was disappointed that the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality didn't do its own testing and relied on the U.S. Geological Survey instead.

The department previously received information from the U.S. Geological Survey regarding its September tests, and a spokesman said last week that the department had received no information from the National Park Service related to its October tests.

"ADEQ has been working collaboratively with the [National Park Service] on water quality-related issues," read the department statement sent to the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*. "In fact, ADEQ has previously offered the use of continuous dissolved oxygen monitors to [the National Park Service] for evaluating the effects of algal blooms on aquatic life."

The National Park Service has detected too-low oxygen levels in Big Creek before, but has never found too-low oxygen levels in the Buffalo River, Bitting said.

Metro on 11/07/2016

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Oklahoma Agency Plans to Shut Disposal Wells After Earthquake

Sheela Tobben Jessica Summers
vtobben jessica.summers
November 7, 2016 — 6:18 PM CST

Oklahoma's oil and gas regulator plans to shut some disposal wells and reduce the volume of others as its initial response to Sunday's earthquake near the oil hub of Cushing.

"Other plans are being developed that will encompass larger areas" and more details are coming tomorrow, the Oklahoma Corporation Commission said Monday in an e-mailed advisory.

The commission said the plan covered 700 square miles. It didn't say how many wells were affected. When a quake of similar magnitude hit the state in September, the agency ordered 37 wells shut in a 500-square-mile area. The commission in 2015 established a "volume reduction area" covering 11,000 square miles, or about one-sixth of the state.

Cushing is the delivery point for West Texas Intermediate crude futures. WTI for December delivery rose 82 cents to settle at \$44.89 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

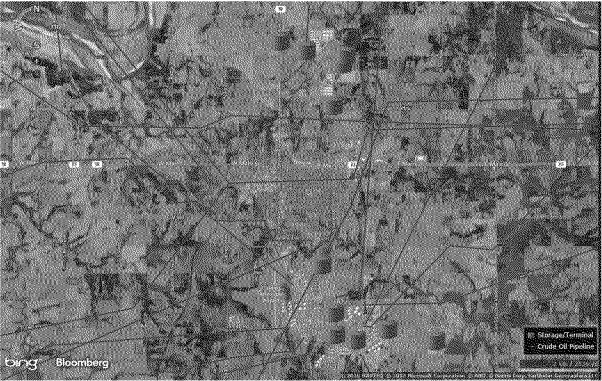
"It's definitely a long-term negative development if you are getting earthquakes of that magnitude at such an important site," Bob York, director of the futures division at Mizuho Securities USA Inc. in New York, said by telephone. "It doesn't bode well for the future."

Pipelines Operating

The Oklahoma agency reported earlier that all pipelines under its jurisdiction were operating again after shutting down as a precaution because of the temblor, centered less than 2 miles west of Cushing.

Magellan Midstream Partners LP, a pipeline operator, resumed normal operations at Cushing late Sunday after a controlled shutdown of its assets after the quake, Bruce Heine, a spokesman, said in e-mailed statements. Enbridge Inc. facility in Cushing was unaffected, Michael Barnes, a spokesman, said by e-mail.

Magellan typically suspends operations to check the integrity of assets if an earthquake over a certain strength occurs, Heine said. Kinder Morgan Inc., another pipe operator, hasn't had any issues affecting its Cushing operations, Richard Wheatley, a Houston-based spokesman for the company said in an e-mailed statement.



Other Tremors

Several producers, as well as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency are facing lawsuits because of seismic activity allegedly linked to oilfield wastewater disposal in Oklahoma and other states. The OCC has been issuing restrictions for more than a year aimed at cutting down on the amount of wastewater injected into underground wells.

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There are about 35,000 active wastewater disposal wells, though only a few dozen have been linked to quakes, according to a Bloomberg Intelligence report in May citing the USGS. A 5.6-magnitude temblor struck Oklahoma in September, which tied a state record set in 2011. Following the earthquake at Cushing on Sunday, minor tremors occurred at Nicoma Park, east of Oklahoma City, and Fairview in the western part of the state.

The region, previously not known for intense seismic activity, began having a significant number of earthquakes in 2009, the same year area oil companies began using fracking to shatter deep rock layers to extract oil and gas. Fracked wells produced large quantities of wastewater, which drilling companies inject into ultra-deep disposal wells.

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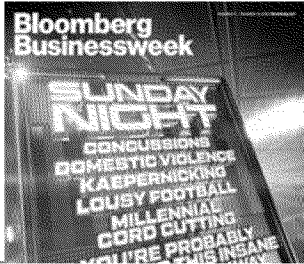
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Climate Summit's Urgent Goal: Cut More Emissions, Faster

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A year after the landmark Paris climate agreement, negotiators gathering in Morocco for the next round agree pledges do not go far enough.

BY JOHN H. CUSHMAN JR.

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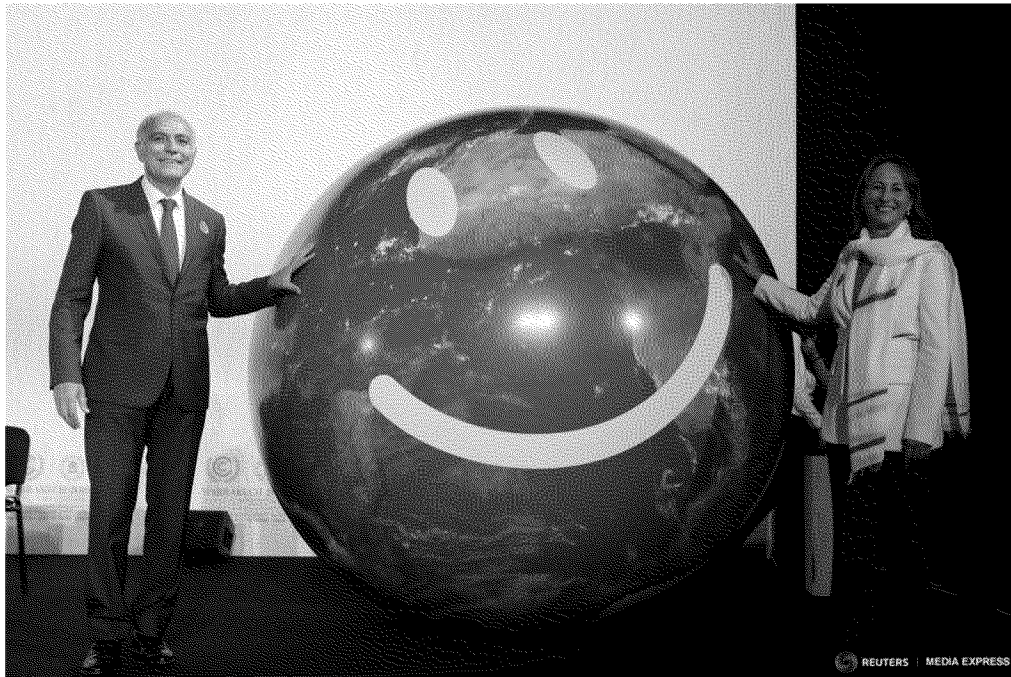
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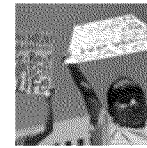


Morocco's foreign minister Salaheddine Mozouar and French environment minister Segolene Royal are full of smiles as the latest round of UN climate talks began on Monday in Marrakech.

If there was one unifying principle as this year's United Nations climate conference started in Marrakesh, Morocco on Monday, it was that the world needs to lift its ambition in fighting global warming.

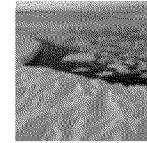
Unless the world acts quickly, warned Erik Solheim, head of the UN Environment Program (UNEP), "we will grieve over the avoidable human tragedy.

"The growing numbers of climate refugees hit by hunger, poverty, illness and conflict will be a constant reminder of our failure to deliver," he said last week as UNEP unveiled its annual "gap report" describing how far short the promises so far have fallen. "The science shows that we need to move much faster."



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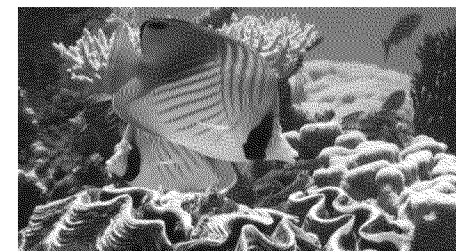
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SPECIES ON THE MOVE

Threadfin Butterflyfish



The tropical Threadfin Butterflyfish might be finding a new home as temperatures

"The world is not nearly on track," agreed Patricia Espinosa, executive secretary of the UN climate negotiation body, in an essay co-authored with Morocco's foreign minister and COP22 president, Salaheddine Mezouar.

The problem is simple: temperatures are increasing along with carbon dioxide emissions and its concentration in the atmosphere. Unless this changes in the next few years, the primary goal of the Paris Agreement, negotiated last year and put into effect last week, will drift out of reach in just a few years.

The goal is to limit global warming well below 2 degrees Celsius and as close as possible to 1.5 degrees, to avoid the most severe impacts of global warming.

It has been clear all along that the pledges offered by those joining the Paris agreement are not adequate to achieve that. The first decision of COP21 last year stressed the urgency of accelerating action, and of taking additional steps well before 2020.

A new memorandum of advice for policymakers issued a few weeks ago by Espinosa's science advisers said that even though the promises so far are "woefully short," Paris had provided "significant momentum to build on."

That memo, "Climate Action Now," noted that the costs of clean energy are falling, lower oil prices open an opportunity for carbon taxes and the private sector is beginning to address climate risks.

It would be Pollyannish to think that this is all guaranteed.

"Pretending that these temperature goals are achievable was (and is) essential to the diplomatic process," David Victor of the Brookings

on the southeast coast of Australia become more welcoming.

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Institution wrote in a recent paper for the Harvard Project on Climate Agreements.

"It was politically feasible to agree on such bold, aspirational collective goals—even if they are largely unachievable—because no individual country needed to take responsibility for delivering," he wrote. "Sometime soon the diplomatic community will need to face the reality that we need new, achievable, and more useful long-term goals."

But the United States, China and other major nations continue to talk about increasing their ambition—although not necessarily as quickly or as stringently as the experts say may be required.

Jonathan Pershing, the new U.S. chief negotiator, has said he plans to describe the path the U.S. will follow to new higher ambitions—assuming that Hillary Clinton is elected president. (The initial U.S. pledge was to cut its emissions up to 28 percent by 2025.)

"At the moment, what we have from the world are commitments for 2025 or for 2030, but we know that by 2050 or certainly by the end of the century we've got to have deep de-carbonization," he told reporters last week. "Twenty percent is not enough, 30 percent is not enough. We need to think about an 80 percent reduction or perhaps more."

Industry and institutional investors, too, are going to have to do more. One survey of hundreds of companies found that they have put in place plans to cut 1 trillion tons of emissions, but that to reach the goals of Paris they would have to cut 4 trillion tons.

"This gap is equal to nearly 50 percent of these companies' current total emissions," said the report, by CDP, formerly known as the Carbon Disclosure Project.

A review published by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology said that meeting the 2 degree target "requires drastic changes in the global energy mix."

"From an economic perspective, it is not a question of whether we can do it, but at what cost," it said. "We clearly have very low and virtually zero-carbon options."

Many economists say the costs can be substantially reduced if many nations put a price on carbon, such as with a carbon tax or cap-and-trade.

A study by the World Bank and Ecofys found that an international market for carbon emissions could reduce the cost of delivering the needed cuts by between a third and a half.

Even though the current promises are not enough to fully meet the goals, they are already opening up big new markets for clean energy.

A study of pledges made by 21 emerging economies projected that there's potential for \$16 trillion of investments in green buildings in East Asia and the Pacific, \$2.5 trillion in efficient transportation in Latin America, and so on.

"There has never been a better time than now for climate-smart investing," said Philippe Le Houérou, executive vice president of the International Finance Corporation, a unit of the World Bank.

Experts say that while the technologies for 1.5 degrees and 2 degrees of warming are similar, to keep temperatures from rising more than 1.5 degrees would require reaching net zero emissions one or two decades earlier.

According to the World Resources Institute, it's unlikely that Marrakech will determine how this is going to happen; instead, it will set in motion detailed plans for a 2018 meeting "to serve as a springboard for enhanced action, including new or updated national climate plans."

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Jack Cushman is an editor and reporter for InsideClimate News. Before joining ICN, he worked for 35 years as a writer and editor in Washington, D.C., principally with the Washington bureau of The New York Times. Cushman has written extensively about energy, the environment, industry and military affairs, also covering financial and transportation beats, and editing articles across the full spectrum of national and international policy. He served on the board of governors of the National Press Club and was its president in the year 2000. He is the author of "Keystone and Beyond: Tar Sands and the National Interest in the Era of Climate Change."

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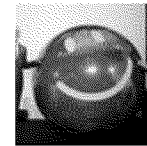
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N4T Investigators: Border patrol agents concerned over dangerous duty

Posted: Nov 07, 2016 11:32 AM CST

Updated: Nov 07, 2016 11:47 PM CST

Written By Kurt Stalma

Reported By John Overall

TUCSON - Agents from the Tucson and Three Points stations are now required to take turns working five-day shifts at the San Miguel camp. Located about two hours southwest of Tucson, the camp sits near the U.S.-Mexico border on the lands of the Tohono O'odham Nation. Agents say the new mandate is unnecessary.



"They're saying is that they built this installation so now that they're expected to use it whether we need it or not."

While on their five-day shift agents cannot leave the camp, not even to go home. That is creating problems for their families.

"Now they're making us stay over there for a whole week and leaving the kids and wife," an agent said. "They don't understand you need to get daycare for the week, you know?"

Stress on their families is not the only concern for these agents, they are also worried about their health.

"The thing is that the water down there has arsenic."

Fliers were posted around the camp warning agents that arsenic levels in the camp's drinking water were above normal health standards. Consuming high levels of arsenic

can have serious long-term health effects including skin problems and cancer. The water was tested last October, but the warning to agents wasn't issued until May.

"They put some filtration system to lower the levels, but that's only in the kitchen, everybody is still showering with the regular water."

President of the local border patrol union, Art Del Cueto, said he understands the agents' concerns and has been working towards a solution.

"They've provided other means for the agents to have water out there," Del Cueto said.

"Our feelings as a union is if there is arsenic in the water obviously you can't cook, don't drink it, don't brush your teeth, but I think who wants to take a shower that potentially has arsenic that is a big concern for us."

The border patrol union is pushing to shut down camps similar to the one in San Miguel, but Del Cueto could not go into specifics.

"The reasons why I think some are needed or others aren't is strictly on an operational standpoint that I've spoke to the agency about and I can't really disclose that."

Del Cueto said he has received several complaints from agents and will continue to push for change, but these things take time.

"It's something we've really been pushing for years," Del Cueto said. "I know the agents hate being mandated, I've been mandated to go out to these camps before. It's not easy. Yes it is part of the job, but I think that the agents that are out there should be properly compensated when they are out there."

The border patrol agency declined our request for an interview but did issue the following statement saying quote:

"Drinking water at most FOBs is tested every 30 to 90 days. If testing results return showing water contamination exceeds EPA safe drinking water limits, the affected FOB is shut down until mitigation strategies are implemented and subsequent water testing shows that it is safe.

If you have a story you'd like us to investigate, email us at investigators@kvoa.com or call 520-955-4444.

No kittens.

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BY MICHAEL KING, GUAM, MON. NOV. 7, 2016

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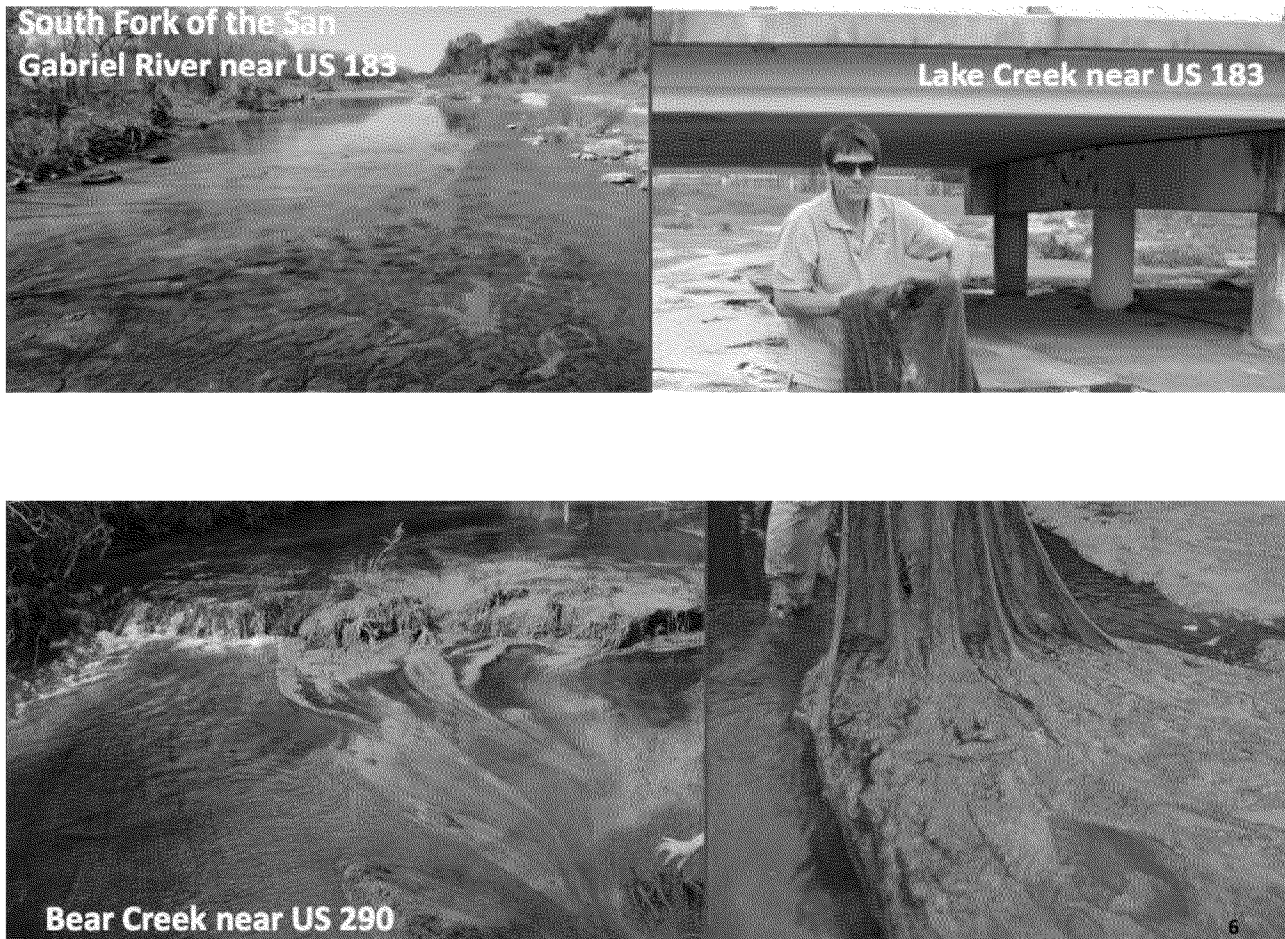
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There was good news and bad news at City Council's Nov. 3 meeting (last Thursday). The best news was a lilting medley from Ruben Ramos and the Mexican Revolution at live music time. The worst was a staff briefing on the future of Onion Creek, if Dripping Springs succeeds in its plan for wastewater disposal.



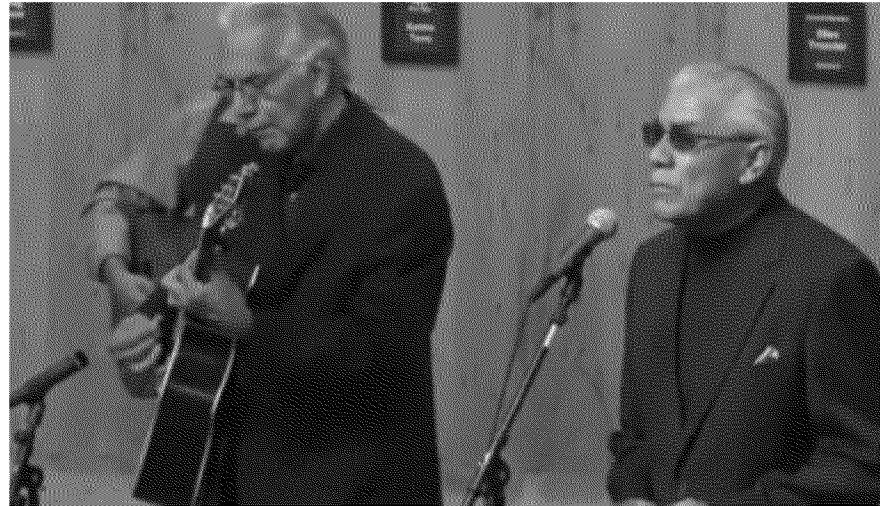
Effects of excess nutrients from treated wastewater (Photo courtesy of City of Austin Watershed Protection)

Worst news first: The morning staff briefing updated the Council on the city's ongoing discussions with Dripping Springs and other stakeholders over the suburb's application to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to discharge, daily, as much as 995,000 gallons of treated wastewater into Onion Creek. The creek is a major contributor to the Edwards and Trinity Aquifers, and thence to Barton Springs, and staff reported that virtually any amount of the wastewater – which would retain contaminants like nitrogen and phosphorus – would degrade the water in the creek, the aquifers, and the Springs. (" Council: From Trash to Treasure," Nov. 4)

The effluent discharge permit is not imminent – the earliest a permanent one could happen is March of 2017, and it would provide a secondary method to spraying on land (the current practice) – but Dripping Springs is growing, land is expensive, and the Belterra development set a

precedent in acquiring a discharge permit (which it hasn't yet used). City of Austin staff has been working with Dripping Springs staff and other stakeholders in hopes of finding alternatives, but Dripping Springs told the Austin Monitor last week that they're moving forward with the application.

The city of Austin officially opposes the permit, and eventually there may be a contested case hearing and perhaps lawsuits from downstream landowners. District 2 Council Member Delia Garza appeared to express the majority's sentiment when she said, "I don't think I need to be a chemist to know essentially it's treated poop being asked to be put in our water." But CM Don Zimmerman said he wanted to hear more from the Dripping Springs perspective – perhaps on the theory that District 6 boundaries now extend into Hays County – and pointed out that Austin already discharges some of its effluent into the Colorado River. That's true, acknowledged Watershed Protection Department Chief Engineer Chris Herrington, but the difference in volume dilution and geology between the Colorado and (often dry) Onion Creek make the comparison unilluminating if not absurd.



Ruben Ramos and the Mexican Revolution

(Photo capture courtesy of City of Austin)

In other matters, Council:

- Approved a six-year interlocal agreement, at a contract limit of \$3.6 million, with Dallas County via the Southwestern Institute of Forensic Sciences at Dallas, to help the Austin Police Department reduce its forensic analysis backlog. City staff agreed to return to Council in a month with an update on progress. (CM Zimmerman complained that a change in the form of posting language required a postponement, but couldn't get a second for his motion.)

- Approved a \$617,000 contract to complete an ADA-compliant fishing pier on the Lady Bird Lake Boardwalk – over objections from D3 CM Sabino Renteria that the original plan had been to put the pier on the north side of the lake, near the I35 crossing and the Rebekah Baines Johnson senior apartments. Other Council members echoed his remarks, voting to approve the contract but indicating they would look for a way to provide a pier on the north side as well. CM Zimmerman used the occasion to object to the Boardwalk altogether as a waste of transportation funds, and said the contract should itself be moved to the north side. Failed for lack of a second.
- Postponed until Nov. 10 third reading on zoning amendments to the Champion Tract (City Park Road at FM 2222), after many neighboring residents and their representatives testified that the amendments would result in an oversize, traffic-heavy, incompatible development and should be rejected. The public hearing will remain open to those who haven't yet testified.

Mayor Pro Tem Kathie Tovo and other CM's suggested they want to tighten requirements for allowing demolition permits on houses deemed (by somebody) "historical."

- Approved a resolution to draft ordinance enabling "permissive" spay/neuter of first-time impounded animals at the Animal Shelter (current standard is second-time); ordinance language would tighten notice-to-owner requirement.
- Approved the cancellation of Nov. 8 work session (election day). Dais toyed with canceling Nov. 10 regular meeting (wasn't posted for action, so legal staff advised using Council message board to indicate absences). But when they considered the burgeoning postponements to that meeting – and the looming return of the Grove PUD – they stuck with the schedule.

There was, finally, a romantic bilingual medley from Ruben Ramos, which made the next three hours (the meeting adjourned just before 9pm) almost bearable.

The agenda for the Nov. 10 meeting is available [here](#). You can review more detail from the Nov. 3 meeting [here](#). For more on City Council, follow the Daily News and this week's print edition.

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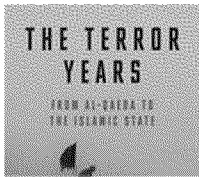


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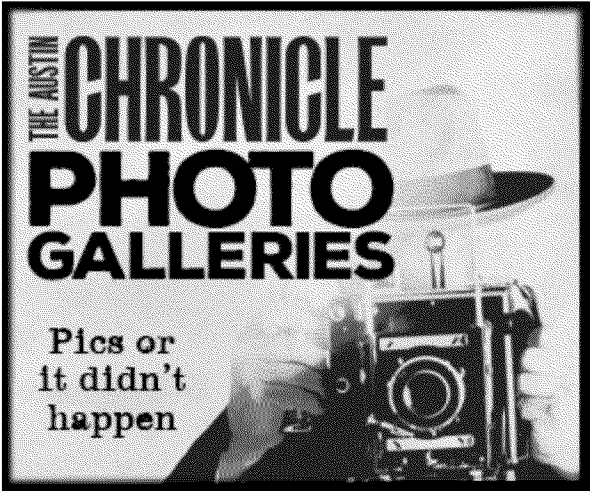
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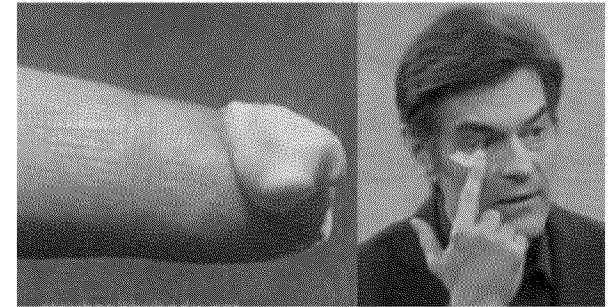
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